

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

USC LLC

Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center

USC LLC Cuts Lead Time with Lean Manufacturing

Client Profile:

USC, LLC, founded in 1999, engineers, designs and manufactures agricultural products. The family-owned business sells seed treatment equipment and accessories throughout the U.S. and abroad. USC currently employs 64 people at its facility in Sabetha, Kansas.

Situation:

Demand for USC's seed treaters was growing and the company was struggling to meet its customer orders in a timely manner. In order to grow and penetrate new markets, they realized they would have to decrease the time it took to fill customer orders by creating a more efficient production line. USC decided to look into Lean manufacturing and called the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

Solution:

MAMTC's Bill Hogan trained USC's entire production staff on the principles of Lean manufacturing. Additionally, a simulation was used to further demonstrate Lean's ability to reduce waste in the production process. Hogan led the company through Value Stream Mapping (VSM) of the seed treater and seed wheel product lines. During a VSM, a current state map of manufacturing processes is compared to a future state map to uncover any non-value-added steps and areas needing improvement. Through this analysis, MAMTC helped USC implement a cart system to more easily move material through the system, from fabrication to welding and assembly. MAMTC introduced USC to 5S (sort, storage, shine, standardize, sustain), a system designed to improve and standardize the work environment for safe and effective operation. With the Lean foundation provided by MAMTC, USC employees continue to create standard procedures to sustain and improve an organized workplace.

Results:

- * Realized \$150,000 in cost savings.
- * Reduced lead time from 4 months to 3 weeks.
- * Invested \$1 million in capital improvements.
- * Created 7 new jobs.

Testimonial:

"MAMTC is the first consultant group that came into our shop and really helped us out. I was amazed we were able to improve our production so much in a short amount of time."

Jim Renyer, President/CEO

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